

PRESS RELEASE
MULTI-NATIONAL SECURITY TRANSITION
COMMAND – IRAQ

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

8 September 2005

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MNSTC-I changes command

BAGHDAD, Iraq – U.S. Army Lt. Gen. David H. Petraeus passed command of the Multi-National Security Transition Command – Iraq (MNSTC-I) to U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Martin E. Dempsey in a well attended change of command ceremony held Sept. 8, in Baghdad.

The ceremonial passing of the flag is mostly symbolic, but Petraeus also gave responsibility and control of MNSTC-I and the NATO Training Mission - Iraq to Dempsey.

U.S. Army Gen. George Casey, commander of Multi-National Forces – Iraq, said that Petraeus' legacy will transcend the number of Iraqi troops trained or weapons delivered.

"Your legacy to the security forces of Iraq will not come in the number of buildings that have been built, or the distribution of air conditioning units or military pieces of equipment," said Casey. "It will come from the values you have personally bred and instilled."

Prior to the change of command ceremony, Casey awarded Petraeus the Defense Distinguished Service Medal for his leadership of MNSTC-I from June 4, 2004 to Sept. 5, 2005.

Petraeus executed a budget of more than \$11.1 billion and oversaw the largest military procurement and distribution effort since World War II during his command, according to his award citation. He is also credited with overseeing the training of more than 100,000 members of the Iraqi Security Forces and a strategy for the development of a

future force of more than 344,000. During Petraeus' command, the Iraqi Security Forces received more than 172,000 AK-47 automatic rifles, 163,000 pistols, 8,000 heavy machine guns and 195,000 sets of body armor.

Petraeus said he could think of no greater honor as a soldier than to have served at the helm of MNSTC-I and the NATO Training Mission - Iraq.

"There has been nothing easy about this, but our troopers and their Iraqi brothers are on a trajectory extending upward, despite all the enemy has done to derail it," Petraeus said. "There is much to be done, but there has also been enormous progress."

Petraeus thanked the Iraqi military and political leaders for their service and dedication.

"Even after I return home, my thoughts will be on Iraq," Petraeus said. "Be assured my brothers, that Iraq and the Iraqi people will always be on my mind and in my heart."

Dempsey said he can't think of a more important mission than to be a part of building and nurturing the Iraqi Security Forces.

"There is no more important work than to advance the cause of freedom," Dempsey said. "I believe in Iraq and the Iraqi people."

Dempsey pledged to continue building, despite the enemy's efforts to destroy, and to continue working to bring the Iraqi people together, despite the enemy's attempts to drive them apart.

The mission of MNSTC-I is to organize, train, equip and mentor Iraqi Security Forces to support the ultimate goal of a unified, stable and democratic Iraq. In turn, this will provide a representative government for the Iraqi people, including new and protected freedoms for all Iraqis, a growing market economy and an able national defense that will not pose a threat to the region.

For more information about the Multi-National Security Transition Command – Iraq, please visit www.mnstci.iraq.centcom.mil

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